SIU Transportation Education Center
Murphysboro, Illinois
CDB Project Number 825-020-143
Thursday, June 18, 2015
9:00 a.m.
Fine Art Review Committee Meeting Minutes

Attendees

Jak Tichenor, Illinois Arts Council
Jeff Armit, Southern Illinois University
Kevin Meyer, FGM Architects
Mike Behrman, Southern Illinois University
Marcy Boudet, Capital Development Board
Scott Weber, Southern Illinois University
Jay Kaizler, Day of Fun
Taylor Bervit, Day of Fun
Emily Waldinger, Capital Development Board
Linda Norbut Suits, Capital Development Board

- Ms. Suits began the meeting with introductions from the group and an overview of the agenda.

- Ms. Suits informed the attendees of CDB's possible stopping of all work effective July 1, 2015. She explained that projects may or may not come to a halt depending on the passing of a budget.

- Ms. Suits explained the means of voting and selecting the art for the project. Three voting members—Jak Tichenor, Scott Weber, and Kevin Meyer—are the FARC members and will make the final decision; however, the whole committee is involved in discussion. Artists are rated and ranked on a sheet for the committee's personal reference. The artists will be rated and ranked based on whether the artwork is aesthetically pleasing, its suitability and relevance, the artist's skill, the artist's past performance, and the artist's objectives.

- Mr. Armit asked how artists were initially chosen. Ms. Suits explained that it was mainly based on the artist's past performance and their submissions to the Request for Qualifications.

- Ms. Suits informed the group that civil work will need to be done for each project. Therefore, the committee should be aware of concrete and other costs included in the budget.

- John Medwedeff began his presentation with a history of his career. He emphasized his love of metalsmithing and hands-on building of his artwork.

- Medwedeff explained his fabrication process. When approached by a client, he has a contract with a design fee and designs in paper and presents it to the client. He builds a series of seven or eight models. Medwedeff also stated that engineering drawings are included in his design. He finally comes to final drawing and models that do not differ from the finished product other than its scale. Preparation models include 1/24, 1/12, and ¼ scale models built increasingly precise specifications. Models include weld seams and map geometry of curves. Medwedeff also works with models of his trucks and trailers to make sure the artwork fits for transportation.

- Mr. Medwedeff began his project proposal by discussing his inspiration from a visit to Detroit and seeing the architecture there and the automotive culture. Mr. Medwedeff explained that he is usually inspired by organic elements, but for this project he was inversely inspired by the architecture of motion and its sleek forms.

- Mr. Medwedeff presented 1":1' models for his proposed pieces. He explained that pieces will be dynamic with the sunlight creating interesting shadows. The sculpture allows for exploration. People can walk under and around and within sculpture. The pieces will be made of steel and painted gray. Mr. Medwedeff said that he took the models outside and noticed that the color changed as the light transitioned.

- Mr. Medwedeff is open to letting the committee decide where the pieces are placed, however he feels that artwork would work best in the grass. The success of the pieces depends on light. Therefore, they would need oriented in a place where the sun will hit it. Medwedeff suggests the North entrance model be placed 45 degrees from due north. The piece would also work with the movement of auto and pedestrian traffic. Furthermore, the glass windows on the building would offer an alternate and fragmented/distorted view of the piece.

- Mr. Medwedeff expresses his concern with the pieces being placed in areas where there would be a lot of distraction. Specifically on the North entrance, parked cars and parking signs could distract from the sculpture and make the area seem too busy.

- Mr. Medwedeff also discussed that if the sculpture was placed on the lawn, it would be on low slab pieces. Slab would be designed as part of the artwork.

- Mr. Medwedeff said that whether or not the sculpture will be lit will be determined by committee discussion and budget.

- A question was asked about the maintenance of the piece and how to handle possible graffiti. Medwedeff claimed that the paint will last decades and spray paint can be easily removed without harming the sculpture. Medwedeff also offered possibly waxing over the paint. Medwedeff desires to have a very durable finish.

- Ms. Suits asked how long Medwedeff's fabrication process is. Medwedeff stated that his fabrication process is relatively fast and would take 4-5 months to build. Pieces are ready to install and in its final form when it leaves the shop.

- Mr. Medwedeff was dismissed and told that models will be given to Illinois State Museum if chosen and mailed back if not. The committee further discussed his work in his absence. Overall the team admired Medwedeff's craftsmanship and his proposal overall.

- Mike Dunbar was introduced to the committee and presented his proposals through booklets for each piece and foam board models.

- Mr. Dunbar wanted to bring the elements present in an engine into the open.

- Mr. Dunbar first began to discuss the inspiration behind piece "Rocket 88." He was inspired by the Wright Flyers and Henry Ford. He explained that the sweeping placement of gears in Rocket 88 make the piece seem like its animated although its standing still.

- Similarly, Mr. Dunbar presented piece "Mustang Sally." Mr. Dunbar stated that the piece was a celebration of the systems within aircraft and automobiles and how they shaped culture.

- Mr. Dunbar said that the two proposals are interchangeable and speak to each other. There is a dialogue between the two sculptures.

- Mr. Dunbar would fabricate the pieces with aluminum weldments. Completed sculptures will have a brushed aluminum finish to reference the materials used in aircraft and automobiles. Dunbar's models were white and he did not paint them because he wanted to emphasize the sculptural elements of the piece.

- Mr. Dunbar highly recommends that pieces be elevated on a 5-6 foot slab of concrete so that the sculpture has a commanding presence and so that it does not act as a place where people can gather.

- Ms. Suits asked about the lighting of the sculpture. Mr. Dunbar replied saying that he could work with either up or down lighting, depending on where the pieces would be located. The sculpture is preferred by Mr. Dunbar to be placed between 10 and 15 feet from the building.

- Ms. Suits asked about his fabrication process. Mr. Dunbar explained that the piece would be made of extruded aluminum. Square weldments are cut out and welded together to form a seamless form. The pieces will seem solid although they would be hollow.

- The group asked about maintenance. Dunbar stated that he made a seemingly maintenance free sculpture. The aluminum should not oxidize and debris would just have to be washed off prevent an oxidation.

- The group asked if the piece would need to be assembled on site. Dunbar stated that there would be some assembly on site of bolting pieces together. Bolts and connectors act as part of the artwork.

- The group asked for more information about the base of the pieces. Mr. Dunbar said that Rocket 88 would need to have both a metal and concrete base.

- Mike asked if there would be any coating on the sculptures. Mr. Dunbar said there will be no coating because he is showcasing the internal makeup and material of aircraft and automobiles.

- Someone asked what kind of bolt will be used. Mr. Dunbar said he would use bolts that would not cause a corrosion process. Often times, Dunbar said he would cover bolts with a cup to give the allusion that the sculpture is solid and thick when in reality it is hollow. He is fond of edge definition and shadow. Every joint to him is a visual accent.

- Mr. Behrman asked if there would be multiple slabs or bases for the pieces. Dunbar specified that he wants just one pedestal per piece. Nothing below the sculpture that would distract from what is above.

- Mr. Dunbar was dismissed.

- The group discussed Mr. Dunbar's work after he left. Ms. Suits mentioned that because of its size, Rocket 88 could be used inside. There is some of the budget that is set aside for possible interior work.

- Mustang Sally was the majority favorite as it has more relevant aesthetic qualities.

- The possibility of using Medwedeff's sculpture in the front and a scaled down version of Dunbar's Mustang Sally in the back was discussed.

- Christine Rojek experienced some technical difficulties at the beginning of her presentation. She was introduced to the committee and gave a presentation on her past work.

- Ms. Rojek presented proposals, images, and scaled models.

- Ms. Rojek explained that she wanted to invite people inside the building to go outside and be a part of the north piece named "Ground to Air." The sculpture acts as a place for gathering and was inspired by flight patterns. She wanted to illustrate how ground and air transportation meet. The piece was intended to be complicated because she felt that it reflected the complicated engineering of automobiles and aircraft.

- Although not in the model, Rojek said she may want to use paint on elements in the man/bird/plane or the horse/bike/car stand out. She said she also may not want to do this because it would take away from self-discovery.

- The blue paint used was used to reflect the sky.

- Ms. Rojek felt that the sculpture should have a sense of humor being on a college campus.

- The second piece Rojek presented was a tool wall on the south entrance. Tool wall was organized similar to the organization in a shop. Rojek said that the piece could be a collaborative piece and the committee could add or take away tools from the work. She named the tool wall "Instrumentum" which means "tool" in Latin.

- The work included benches because she wanted to create a place to congregate. She was inspired by the layering and complexity in tires and engineering. All of the artwork is made from aluminum. The benches are the tread marks of the sculptural wheel.

- Ms. Suits asked about any planned lighting and Ms. Rojek said she had no lighting in mind.

- Ms. Rojek plans on painting or lacquering, painting being preferred. The interior of the tire is painted blue to make cut outs and edges pop.

- The question of how to deal with graffiti was brought up and Ms. Rojek claimed that it can be easily treated with an oil-based presealer.

- Ms. Suits asked about the thickness of the aluminum. Ms. Rojek informed the committee that the aluminum will be between 3/8" and 5/8" thick.

- Ms. Suits asked about Ms. Rojek's fabricating process. Ms. Rojek said that she will send drawings and specifications to a fabricator to help with the process. CNC and water-jet cutting will be used for the forms of horse/car/bike and tire and bird//man/plane. Ms. Rojek said she will be present for the fabrication of major elements.

- Ms. Suits asked how long fabrication will take. Ms. Rojek estimated that it would take 9 months to one year.

- Ms. Boudet asked if there would be any assembly on site. Ms. Rojek said that the archway of "Ground to Air" would arrive in two pieces and be pinned or bolted on site, but appear seamless. The piece as the top of the archway will also be separate upon arrival.

- Ms. Rojek was dismissed.

- The group discussed Ms. Rojek's work and overall decided that her work was interesting, but did not suit the site context.

- John Adduci was introduced to the group and he gave a brief power point on his artistic background.

- He presented his proposed piece for the south entrance first which he called “Gear Up.” Mr. Adduci discussed the placement of his structure and why he chose its orientation. He noticed the awkward, harsh, and blank space near the entrance and thought it would be a place that he could enhance and create a place where students can be interactive. The sculpture allows for wheelchair access. The form is attached to the wall in 5-7 locations and also to the ground. It will be made strong enough for “idiots to climb it safely.” The sculpture will be made of aluminum because it is lightweight and easy to transport, and pertains to the automobile and airplane context. Adduci also plans to run a strip of white LEDs along the underside of the gears so that it is lit at night.

- Mr. Adduci then presented his north entrance piece called “Motor Head.” Mr. Adduci was intimidated by the circle site and so he avoided designing there. He proposed to place the piece in front of the building but slightly offset. The piece will be 22 feet tall without base and 26 feet tall with base that includes a metal bench around it. The base of concrete and metal breaks up the color of the sidewalk and the sculpture. Adduci wanted to take something and make it create its own conceptual motion. The sculpture has a similar bench/gathering concept as Gear Up. The idea for the piece came from automobile and aircraft engines. Mr. Adduci intends to light the sculpture with theatrical LED lights from the ground acting as a spotlight. Adduci felt that he was designing for a specific audience. He believes that you would need to be a “motor head” to understand his piece and considers his work is very site specific.

- Mr. Weber asked if there would be any coating to the aluminum. Mr. Adduci normally does not do anything to aluminum. He explained that if a coating is put on, the aluminum will corrode from the inside out. Mr. Adduci suggested cleaning it yearly with sodium phosphate or another compound to remove debris.

- Mr. Adduci also added that he will be using 50 series aluminum. It is not the strongest, but it bends easily and holds up better in weather. Adduci will do all of the fabrication.

- Ms. Suits asked how long fabrication of pieces will be. Mr. Adduci told the committee that fabrication time will be six months for “Gear Up” and ten months for Motor Head.

- Mr. Behrman asked if there will be any assembly on site. Mr. Adduci said that Motor Head will be shipped in six or seven pieces and assembled on site by bolting. Mr. Adduci showed the committee an example of how he connects pieces on site with bolts. He stated that he would need a crane and a cherry picker on site to assemble.

- Mr. Adduci was dismissed. The committee spoke about his presentation. There was much discussion about the orientation of “Motor Head” and how it would hinder the view of the building and the display of objects within the building.

- In final discussion of all pieces, the team decided that “Rocket 88” and the Rojek sculptures should not be considered.

- There was a potential issue with the orientation of “Gear Up” because of how close it is proposed to be to the entrance. Structure could be hazardous especially at night because someone could accidentally run into it. Potentially moving it further from the entrance could solve this problem. There was also much discussion about vandalism.

- The group talked about potentially putting “Motor Head” at the south entrance because its orientation at the north entrance was a problem. “Motor Head” would be complementary to the barren south entrance and used as a student gathering place.

- Mr. Behrman suggests eliminating interior art possibilities from the budget to enhance exterior pieces.

- Mr. Armit felt that Medwedeff proposed north entrance piece would work best there because it is a more formal piece for the more formal entrance of the building. That piece could be used to take family graduation pictures. "Gear Up" is a more playful piece that is suitable for the south entrance where primary users are students. "Gear Up" could serve as a place to congregate.

- The committee took Medwedeff's north entrance piece outside. The discussion focused on placement of the piece. Ms. Suits asked if landscaping near benches was important. Medwedeff's piece could be placed there. This would give the piece a nice backdrop of the building and it would not disrupt walkways. Furthermore, lighting would be easily installed and seating is available with existing benches.

- The committee went to the south entrance to discuss "Gear Up." The piece will be about 2/3 up the south wall. Orientation would also be slightly changed. The group unanimously agreed that "Gear Up" should be placed at the south entrance and larger Medwedeff piece placed at north entrance.

- Ms. Suits filled out the final paper work and everyone agreed on final ratings.

- The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.